

# PARISH RECEPTION OF THE HOLY OILS FROM THE CHRISM MASS

From the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

## INTRODUCTION FROM THE USCCB

1. It is appropriate that the Oil of the Sick, the Oil of Catechumens, and the Sacred Chrism, which are blessed by the Bishop during the Chrism Mass, be presented to and received by the local parish community.
2. The reception of the holy oils may take place at the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday or on another day after the celebration of the Chrism Mass.
3. The oils should be reserved in a suitable repository in the sanctuary or near the baptismal font.
4. The oils, in suitable vessels, are carried in the procession of the gifts, before the bread and wine, by members of the assembly.
5. The oils are received by the Priest and are then placed on a suitably prepared table in the sanctuary or in the repository where they will be reserved.
6. As each of the oils is presented, the following or other words may be used to explain the significance of the particular oil.
7. The people's response may be sung.

Full Description Available Online at:  
<https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year-and-calendar/triduum/order-for-the-reception-of-the-holy-oils>

OPTIONAL RITE OF RECEPTION OF THE HOLY OILS  
AT THE PROCESSION FOR PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

*The Oils, in suitable vessels, are carried in the Entrance Procession by ministers or other persons. The vessels of oil are placed on a table which has been prepared for them in the sanctuary. The Priest may incense the Oils after he has incensed the altar.*

*After the Greeting of the Mass the Priest may briefly explain the significance of the blessing of the Oils and their use. The Oils are then placed in the repository where they are to be reserved and the Mass continues in the usual manner.*

Presenter: The Oil of the Sick.

Priest: May the sick who are anointed with this oil experience the compassion of Christ and his saving love, in body and soul.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Presenter: The Oil of Catechumens.

Priest: Through anointing with this oil may our Catechumens who are preparing to receive the saving waters of Baptism be strengthened by Christ to resist the power of Satan and reject evil in all its forms.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Presenter: The Sacred Chrism.

Priest: Through anointing with this perfumed Chrism may children and adults, who are baptized and confirmed, and Priests, who are ordained, experience the gracious gift of the Holy Spirit.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

## Parish Care of the Holy Oils

Parishes and institutions of the Diocese of Green Bay receiving Holy Oils into their care from the Diocesan Chrism Mass are reminded that in maintaining their supply of Holy Oils for the year, it is not permissible to dilute the blessed oils with unblessed oil (ie: for the purposes of filling large display and presentation vessels, etc). The USCCB further clarifies, however: “In case of true necessity only, a Priest may increase the volume of blessed oils by adding unblessed oil to them. It would be an abuse however, if this practice became routine for the sake of expedience and convenience.” (NCCB Committee on the Liturgy Vol. 30) Diluting the Holy Oils, therefore, should not become a standard practice. It is reminded that priests may bless additional Oil of the Sick and Oil of the Catechumens using the prescribed rituals.

It is also not permissible to add newly blessed oil to blessed oil from former years. “Each year when the Bishop blesses the oils and consecrates the chrism, the pastor should see that the old oils are properly disposed of by burning and that they are replaced by the newly blessed oils. Burning the old oils may be accomplished by burning them in the Easter Fire at the Easter Vigil Mass. It is not fitting that the Holy Oils be burned along with trash or other non-religious refuse.” (*Book of Blessings*, Chapter 32, Order for the Blessing of a Repository for the Holy Oils)

An alternative to burning is burying the unused oils in a sacred place. A fitting place would be on the church grounds. This can be accomplished by digging an appropriate size trench along the foundation of the church. This trench should be at least 12 inches deep and of a size that the oils will not be evident on the surface after the trench is filled. There is no environmental concern as the oils and chrism essence are non-petroleum base and will eventually be absorbed into the ground. If the quantity of oil is so large that burying them on the church ground is not feasible, then an alternative place to bury the oils is a Catholic cemetery.

Ambry vessels and other containers used to store and transport the oils should be cleansed with hot soapy water to dilute the olive oil and essence of chrism. This soapy water should be emptied directly into the ground next to the church in a similar manner and location as recommended for burying old oils. The practice of emptying the soapy water into a sacrarium is *not* recommended as it has the potential to obstruct the pipes. After it appears that all traces of the old oils have been removed, the ambry vessels and containers can be cleansed and dried in a normal fashion. The plastic containers from the Chrism Mass used to transport the oils should be cleaned in a similar way; they do not need to be returned.

Please contact the Office of Divine Worship by email at ‘[worship@gbdioc.org](mailto:worship@gbdioc.org)’ with any questions or for clarification. May you have a blessed celebration of the Triduum.

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